Appl. No. 10/052,684
Amdt. dated April 3, 2006
Reply to Office Action of October 3, 2005

PATENT

Amendments to the Abstract:

Please replace the Abstract with the following:

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method for managing virtual links within a multiple protocol label switched network is provided. A virtual link which includes a set of links between two devices is regarded as a single entity by a control component of a label switching router. Each packet to be transported on the virtual link is labeled based on its assigned forwarding equivalence class. A specific label is bound to a corresponding forwarding equivalence class. Such packets can be forwarded onto any one of the links within the virtual link. To load balance the various links within the virtual link, different selected hash functions are used at selected times to apportion the packets. depending on the load conditions.